

BRIGHTWOOD RAILWAY COMPANY.

MAY 19, 1898.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. CURTIS, of Iowa, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 10280.]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 10280) to require the Brightwood Railroad Company to abandon its overhead trolley on Kenyon street between Seventh and Fourteenth streets, after careful consideration of the subject, report the bill back to the House with the recommendation that it do pass with the following amendments:

In title of bill strike out the word "Railroad" and insert in lieu thereof the word "Railway."

Page 1, line 3, strike out the words "Avenue Railroad" and insert in lieu thereof the word "Railway."

Page 1, line 9, strike out the words "three years" and insert in lieu thereof the words "one year."

Page 2, line 1, strike out the words "three years" and insert in lieu thereof the words "one year."

Page 2, line 7, add the following:

And after the expiration of said thirty days said Brightwood Railway Company shall be liable to a fine of twenty-five dollars a day for each day its tracks, or any part thereof, or its poles, or any one of them, shall remain in said Kenyon or Marshall streets, said fine to be collected in any court of competent jurisdiction at the suit of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia.

The above amendments are made at the suggestion of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia and with the concurrence of your committee.

The Brightwood Railway Company runs a shuttle car over its Kenyon and Marshall streets branch; there is no conductor, and no fares are charged or collected. This branch of the road can not pay operating expenses, and in its present condition of track and surface acts as a detriment to the development of the street upon which it exists. It is believed by the committee that the requirements of this bill—that they must within one month from the passage of the act vacate that part of their road on Kenyon and Marshall streets between Seventh and Four-

teenth streets, and remove its tracks and poles therefrom, without abandoning its entire charter—are just to both the public and the railway company.

It is also provided that said company shall have the right, at any time within one year from the passage of this act, to equip and operate said road with underground electric power, such as is now being used by the Metropolitan Railroad Company. If the company neglect or refuse to so equip the said road within one year, their right to do so shall stand forfeited and their charter repealed as to said part of said road.

The proposed legislation has the earnest support of the property holders living along this route. Your committee incorporate as a part of their report the following petition:

To the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled:

We, the undersigned property owners and residents of Kenyon and Marshall streets, between Seventh and Fourteenth streets, respectfully represent that the Brightwood Avenue Railroad Company is now occupying said Kenyon and Marshall streets by a short-line railroad, propelled by overhead electric trolley. To support the wires used in the operation of said road it has and is maintaining large and unsightly poles, erected on both sides of said streets, with the wires aforesaid stretched from one sidewalk to the other. That said railroad track is for the greater part of the distance of the said streets above the level of the roadbed of same, thus interfering greatly with the travel thereon. Said cars when in motion make the most obnoxious and disagreeable noises, and by reason thereof interfere with the peaceful sleep and rest of your petitioners, who reside on said streets.

Upon the whole, said road is the most abominable specimen of railroad that is now in operation in any part of the District of Columbia; that said road, in the opinion of your petitioners, is of no benefit whatever to the residents of said streets or any other section, said cars not carrying, to the best of petitioners' belief, on an average more than from 15 to 20 passengers per day, and is entirely useless and unnecessary for the public good and a nuisance to said neighborhood.

Your petitioners therefore respectfully request that said road be required by a law, to be passed by your honorable body, to abandon the use of the overhead trolley system on said streets and place its motive power underground, or else abandon said road altogether.

Chas. F. Calhoun, 1333 Kenyon street; Robert Kopp, 1323 Kenyon street; Samuel Baxter, 1221 Kenyon street; Judson D. Cobb, 1219 Kenyon street; Samuel G. Rogers, 1223 Kenyon street; Jacob Madert, 1322 Kenyon street; B. A. McInturff, 1337 Kenyon street; W. A. Murkell, 1370 Kenyon street; J. T. Hundley, 1321 Kenyon street; T. F. Gallo-way, 1351 Kenyon street; Mrs. J. Brown, 1346 Kenyon street; George W. Myers, 1349 Kenyon street; Charles A. Hamilton, 1305 Kenyon street; Emanuel Washington, 926 Kenyon street; Arlena M. Gordon, 810 Marshall street; Steven D. Hurraday, 808 Marshall street; Robert Brown, 806 Marshall street; Annie S. Holmes, 821 Marshall street; Florida V. Henderson, 741 Marshall street; Edgar Ball, 735 Marshall street; William Böhm, 727 Marshall street; C. H. Williams, 725 Marshall street; M. E. Warfield, 721 Marshall street; W. E. Franks, 719 Marshall street; Andrew Schickler, 715 Marshall street; Michael Kelly, 705 Marshall street; Geo. Simmons, owner of Nos. 1300, 1301, and 1307 Kenyon street.

The legislation is also urged by the Columbia Heights Citizens' Association, and the committee also incorporates as a part of its report, which will further explain the situation and show the necessity of some legislation of this kind, the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted at a meeting of this association held on March 1, 1898:

The Columbia Heights Citizens' Association in meeting assembled.

Whereas the Brightwood Avenue Railroad Company is operating a short line railroad on Kenyon and Marshall streets, between Seventh and Fourteenth streets, with an overhead trolley, having large and unsightly poles planted on either side of said streets, its wires stretched from one side of the street to the other, and being the only railroad in the District of Columbia allowed to maintain such construction.

And whereas it further appears that the car used on said road is old and unfit for use, being, as this association is informed, in a dilapidated condition, thus causing

unnecessary noise while in operation, to the great annoyance of residents on said streets;

And whereas it is also apparent to this association that said Kenyon street is less improved by residents than any other street in Columbia Heights, and it is believed by this association that said railroad, by reason of the condition of same, and the way in which it is operated, is the prime cause, if not the absolute cause of said street being behind in improvement, thus depriving the District government of a considerable revenue by way of taxation;

And whereas the residents of said street have petitioned Congress to "require said road to place its motive power underground and abandon the overhead system or else abandon said road altogether;" and this association believing it to be for the best interest of the owners of property and residents of said street, as well so for the District government, that such action should be taken;

This association being credibly informed that said road does not carry on an average of more than 50 passengers per day, and the majority of those being nurses and children, who ride back and forth only for pleasure, without paying anything, there being no fare collected on said part of said road;

It is apparent therefore, that said road is unnecessary and without any benefit to the public, and detrimental to said railroad company; and that said railroad company is only maintaining same with the hope of extending its charter by reason thereof:

That upon the whole said railroad is an abominable nuisance to the residents of said street in its present condition and unworthy of recognition by the citizens or officials of the District of Columbia;

Therefore be it resolved, That this association in meeting assembled respectfully and earnestly requests Congress to pass House bill No. 10280, requiring said railroad company either to equip its road with underground electric power or to abandon same altogether.

That the president of this association appoint three members of same, as a special committee to urge upon the Commissioners of the District of Columbia the necessity of their cooperation in this behalf, and also to appear before the committees of Congress in charge of the affairs of the District of Columbia, and urge the passage of said bill.

That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia and the committees of the House and Senate in charge of the affairs of the District of Columbia.

The committee also recommends that H. R. 7944, relating to this same subject, be laid upon the table.

